



**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**OF THE**

***HUBERT H. HUMPHREY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM  
EVALUATION***

Submitted to:

**United States Department of State**  
(formerly the United States Information Agency)  
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs  
Office of Policy and Evaluation

by

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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **Chapter I. Introduction**

### ***The Program***

The Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program, a U.S.-government-sponsored international exchange program, is designed to bring accomplished professionals from designated countries to the United States at the midpoint of their careers. The U.S. Department of State (formerly the United States Information Agency) administers the Humphrey Program, assisted by the Institute of International Education (IIE). The Humphrey Program has four goals: 1) to update professional expertise and leadership skills, 2) to broaden understanding and knowledge of development issues, 3) to contribute to mutual understanding, and 4) to establish and enhance long-lasting productive partnerships. During the Humphrey Program year, fellows participate in academic course work and professional development activities. Since the program began 20 years ago, over 2,500 individuals from more than 120 countries have received the highly competitive one-year fellowship.

### ***The Study***

The Office of Policy and Evaluation, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, in the U.S. Department of State requested an evaluation of the outcomes and impacts of the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program. The agency contracted with Macro International Inc. (Macro) in September 1998 to 1) assess the impact of the program on the individual fellows and their home country, and 2) develop a performance measurement system that can be used for other academic and professional exchange programs.

Before evaluating impacts on fellows and their home countries, Macro analyzed data from the IIE database, observed the candidate selection process, interviewed program coordinators at all Humphrey universities, and visited three universities for in-depth study. Then Macro administered a survey to about 200 fellows at the Humphrey Program 20th Anniversary Conference and conducted case studies in Brazil, Ghana, Senegal, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

The results from the survey and case studies are reported in Volume I and summarized below. Volume II describes the Humphrey Fellowship Program performance measurement system.

## **Chapter II. Work Experience**

### ***Fellows Employment***

Prior to the fellowship, nearly three-fourths of the surveyed fellows worked in the public sector (74 percent). The public sector continues to account for the majority of fellows immediately upon their return (67 percent) and currently (53 percent), though a growing number of fellows are found in the private sector and non-government organizations (NGOs). The proportion of

fellows in the private sector grew from 19 percent before the fellowship to 22 percent immediately after to 31 percent currently. Even more striking was the doubling of the proportion of fellows in NGOs: 8 percent before the fellowship, 11 percent after the fellowship, and 16 percent currently.

Immediately after their Humphrey Program year, about three of every four survey respondents (76 percent) returned to the same organization they had left, but only two of every five fellows (39 percent) assumed the same position at their workplace. Interviews with fellows uncovered great variation across countries, with Senegalese most likely to remain at the same organization, and Filipinos least likely. About two-thirds of the surveyed fellows had a post-program position with more responsibility (69 percent) or more status (65 percent).

### ***Readjustment Experiences***

The professional transition upon return was rated *Easy* by approximately half of the surveyed fellows (51 percent) and *Medium* by another third (34 percent). Fellows from the later years (1990-99) were more likely than those in the earlier years to rate the transition as hard. The majority of interviewed fellows in all countries except Brazil described a positive readjustment. Those in all five countries whose efforts were impeded recalled positions that had been filled in their absence, organizational cultures unresponsive to outside ideas, jealous coworkers and threatened bosses, changes in political administration (in Brazil), and a frustrating lack of resources or infrastructure (in Africa). With sensitivity to their work environments, nearly all fellows overcame these obstacles over time.

### ***Implementation of New Ideas at Work***

Upon return to their home country, interviewed fellows were able to implement new ideas in nearly all cases. Technology was a key focus in all countries: fellows introduced hardware and software, as well as new uses for the technology. Ideas to make their offices function more systematically and more inclusively were important to some. Many introduced new programs or projects at their office, based on examples seen in the United States. Dissemination of ideas to others was nearly universal among fellows, via presentations, papers, and informal means.

## **Chapter III. Development of Knowledge and Skills**

### ***Substantive Knowledge***

Nearly all survey respondents (95 percent) reported that they acquired field-specific knowledge either *A lot* (62 percent) or *Somewhat* (33 percent). Gains in knowledge of management were cited by interviewed fellows in all five countries. This supports the survey result that indicated fellows in business were the most likely to say they had learned *A lot* of knowledge in their field (85 percent).

### ***Practical Skills***

More than nine of every 10 surveyed fellows attributed gains to the Humphrey Program of Aa lot@ or Asomewhat@in leadership skills (91 percent) and communication skills (90 percent). Over eight of every 10 fellows reported the same for management skills (88 percent) and presentation skills (88 percent). At least seven of every 10 fellows rated their English skills (72 percent) and computer skills (70 percent) similarly. Only 64 percent did so for grant or proposal writing.

Interviewed fellows in all countries reported that their computer skills were greatly enhanced. Leadership, management, and communication skills were also cited by interviewed fellows as frequently improved through the Humphrey Program.

## **Chapter IV. Contacts with Americans and Other Fellows**

### ***Maintaining Contacts***

Nearly all surveyed fellows (94 percent) maintain contact with people met in the United States, as do interviewed fellows in the African countries. About four-fifths of the Brazilians and the Filipinos and half of the Malaysians also maintain such contacts. Nearly all of the Asians and the Senegalese maintain contact with other fellows, as do most Ghanaians and Brazilians.

Four of every five surveyed fellows (81 percent) maintain both professional and personal contacts. Yet most contacts occur once a year (30 percent) or four times a year (32 percent). Interviewed fellows in all countries confirmed that communications were infrequent and difficult to sustain.

### ***Results from Contacts***

Interviewed fellows reported a wealth of results from their contacts. The contacts enabled fellows to exchange information, independently or jointly write papers and develop proposals, initiate regional or international collaborations, carry out community service projects, conduct business, and develop additional contacts. Alumni associations, at varying degrees of activity, have promoted efforts to strengthen their communities through fellows=combined efforts.

## **Chapter V. Attitude Changes and Understanding of the U.S. and Americans**

### ***Understanding of Americans***

Fellows developed increased understanding of Americans by participating in many facets of Americans=lives: becoming involved with their children=s schools, attending religions services, engaging in everyday contact with Americans, attending cultural events, etc. Host families were often critical to exposing fellows to American systems, traditions, families, and informal life.

Key American values and traits noted by interviewed fellows in all countries were respect for and equality of all individuals, a focus on time and results, and the warmth and honesty of Americans.

### ***Understanding of the U.S.***

Nearly every surveyed fellow (98 percent) reported learning Aa lot@or Asomewhat@about U.S. practices and cultures, and almost as many (94 percent) indicated the same for U.S. government and policies. Interviewed fellows were most impressed with the American education system. Brazilian fellows also praised the activeness of Americans in local politics and the extent to which Americans volunteer.

### ***Attitudinal and Personal Changes***

Surveyed fellows reported that the Humphrey Program had a great impact upon them personally. Almost all fellows said the program increased Aa lot@or Asomewhat@their motivation and ambition (97 percent), their interest in world issues and cultural tolerance (96 percent for each), their self-confidence (92 percent), and their independence (89 percent). Interviewed fellows were similarly positive about their personal development. Some described their Humphrey Program year as a Alife changing@event.

## **Chapter VI. Accomplishments**

Maintaining friendships was the accomplishment surveyed fellows were most likely to report as a result of interactions with U.S. contacts (93 percent). Two-thirds of the fellows said the interactions enabled them to stay up-to-date on information in their field (68 percent) and to implement new approaches in their work (67 percent). For interviewed fellows the single most significant accomplishment from the Humphrey Program ranged from new approaches and new programs they implemented or managed, to changes in motivating factors, to increased motivation and confidence.

## **Chapter VII. Conclusion**

Fellows conveyed an enthusiasm for and belief in the Humphrey Program and its impacts even as many as 20 years later. Virtually all 110 fellows interviewed exhibited a determination to make a difference and a confidence that they would overcome obstacles. Fellows returning to regions and countries with the greatest needs often (though not always) experienced environments more conducive to having an impact, perhaps because their skills and knowledge were in such demand. In a few cases, receptive environments were created by other Humphrey fellows present in the same place of work. Fellows facilitated their own abilities to achieve results by entering their Humphrey Program year with a concrete plan (even as they remained open to unanticipated areas of learning), maintaining contact with their office while away, and forming strong networks with Americans that could serve as resources upon the fellows=return to their home country.